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Education the 2024 theme for task force for Jewish life in Sweden

Published 13 February 2024

The task force for Jewish life in Sweden held its third meeting on Friday 9 February, with its discussions mainly focused on the 2024 theme of education. New representatives of the National Agency for Education and the Swedish National Council of Adult Education joined this meeting. The task force will also continue to address last year's theme of security in 2024.

"Combating antisemitism has been a priority for the Government since we took office. In recent months, we've unfortunately seen a sharp increase in antisemitism and threats and hate against Jews in Sweden. This is entirely unacceptable, and given the current situation, we will not let up in our efforts to tackle security issues. This year, the main focus area for the Government's task force is education. In these times of increasing resistance to facts and Holocaust denial, it's particularly important that we learn from history. The Holocaust must have a special status in our collective memory and, if properly preserved, this memory is a vaccine against history repeating itself," says Minister for Culture Parisa Liljestrand.

"We're not relinquishing our focus on safety and security issues for Jewish communities and institutions. The Government has increased its grants for security-enhancing measures for faith communities. I also recently had a meeting with representatives of faith communities and the insurance industry to clarify the problems concerning insuring synagogues and discuss possible solutions," says Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health Jakob Forssmed.

"One must be able to live openly and safely as a Jew in all schools. Successfully pushing back against antisemitism requires increased awareness and knowledge. Teachers need tools to address contemporary antisemitism in their teaching. Knowledge about antisemitism and its various forms of expression – from the most blatant to the more subtle – needs to increase," says Minister for Schools Lotta Edholm.

The task force for Jewish life was presented by the Government in January 2023. It is an interministerial working group tasked with collaborating and conducting dialogue on preventive measures and efforts to improve the conditions for Jewish life and prevent and combat antisemitism in Sweden. The Government's efforts to combat antisemitism are a priority and focus on three areas: education, increasing the safety and security of Jews in Sweden, and Jewish life in Sweden.

The task force is led by State Secretary to the Prime Minister Johan Stuart and also includes eight state secretaries from six different ministries. The task force includes three civil society organisations: the Official Council of Swedish Jewish Communities, Judiska Ungdomsförbundet (the Jewish Youth Association in Sweden) and the Jewish Committee Against Antisemitism. Representatives of relevant government agencies, organisations and other experts also take part.

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